March 24
1921

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

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"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession" (PSALMS 2: 8).

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*TESTIMONY OF THE GOSPEL.

IT is indeed a privilege to meet here, in this holy house of worship, to commune not only with one another, but with God our eternal Father, being shut out from all the unrest and turmoil of the world. I think never before in my life have I seen such a contrast between the peace and contentment and assurance of the Latter-day Saints, and the unrest, the strife, envy and bitterness of the world. In the first section of the Doctrine and Covenants you will remember that the Lord refers to the tendency of the world to have different gods. They set up unto themselves their gods which are after the fashion of the world. Has there ever been a time in the history of the world when men worshiped so many different gods after the fashion of the world—the god of wealth, the god of industrialism, the god of unionism, the god of greed, of selfishness, the god of sensuality? Why it seems to me that every form of idol is now worshiped in preference to God the Eternal Father, and men sacrifice everything for their earthly deities.

I testify to you this morning, my brethren and sisters, in all soberness, that God our Heavenly Father lives, that he communicates with his servants, that he has established in this dispensation of the world his great work; the only plan of salvation whereby mankind may be saved, the only means by which peace may be established in the world. Peace can come only when men will acknowledge God as their Creator, as their Father, and when they will obey the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ; when they will have in their souls individual righteousness, a desire to reverence God, a desire to serve their fellow-men, a desire to bless the other man, instead of bringing, at the ex-

*Delivered by Apostle David O. McKay at a fast meeting, September 28th, 1919.

pense of the other man, some benefit to themselves. The lines are being more sharply drawn, every day of our lives, as never before; and we can sit complacently and quietly, look over that world and know for a surety the distinction between the peace of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the conflict and envy of the gospel of strife. We must preach repentance, as the Prophet Joseph through inspiration declares in so many of the revelations, and preach, too, the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I said to you that I know that the Lord communicates with his servants. I have not doubted this as a fact since I was a boy and heard the testimony of my father, regarding the revelation that came to him of the divinity of the mission of the Prophet Joseph. I feel impressed to relate that circumstance and add his testimony to the one that I am now giving. He accepted a call to a mission about 1880. When he began preaching, in his native land, and bore testimony of the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ, he noticed that the people turned away from him. They were bitter in their hearts against anything "Mormon," and the name of Joseph Smith seemed to arouse antagonism in their hearts. One day he concluded that the best way to get these people would be to preach just the simple principles, the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, the first principles of the gospel, and not bear testimony of the restoration of the gospel. It first came simply, as a passing thought, but yet it influenced his future work. In a month or so he became oppressed with a gloomy, downcast feeling and he could not enter into the spirit of his work. He did not really know what was the matter, but his mind became obstructed, his spirit became clogged, he was oppressed and hampered; and that feeling of depression continued until it weighed him down with such heaviness that he went to the Lord and said: "Unless I can get this feeling removed, I will have to go home. I can not continue my work with this feeling."

It continued for some time after that, when, one morning, before daylight, following a sleepless night, he decided to retire to a cave, near the ocean, where he knew he would be shut off from the world entirely, and there pour out his soul to God and ask why he was oppressed with this feeling, what he had done, and what he could do to throw it off and continue his work. He started out in the dark towards the cave, and he became so eager to get to it that he started to run and was hailed by an officer who wanted to know what was the matter, as he was leaving the town. He gave some non-committal but satisfying reply and was permitted to go on. Something just seemed to drive him; he had to get relief. He entered that place and said: "Oh, Father, what can I do to have this feeling removed? I must have it lifted or I cannot continue in this work;" and he heard a voice, as distinct as the tone I am now uttering, say: "Testify that Joseph Smith is a Prophet of God." Remembering, then, what he tacitly

had decided six weeks or more before, and becoming overwhelmed with the thought, the whole thing came to him in a realization that he was there for a special mission; and that he had not given that special mission the attention which it deserved. Then he cried in his heart, "Lord, it is enough," and went out from the cave. You who know him know the mission he performed. As a boy, I sat and heard that testimony from one whom I trusted and honored, as you know I treasured no other man in the world, and that assurance was instilled in my youthful soul. The inspiration and testimony of God has come since, and to-day I testify to you that God lives, and that he is guiding this Church, that he has inspired those at the head, and that he will continue to inspire them and lead them through this turmoil and unrest in the world, caused by unrighteousness, wickedness and lack of faith in God. The people of the world do not believe in God; they do not believe in his principles; they have not applied his principles in the world. They confess him with their lips, but their hearts have not been with God. Brethren and sisters, let us thank our heavenly Father to-day for the testimony that the Lord Jesus Christ has placed in our souls. May we be true to that testimony, not only in words but in acts, and show the world that we have the principles, obedience to which will establish peace on earth, and good will among men. This is my prayer for all of us, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

BIBLE LANGUAGE.

THE language of the Bible is the language of English-speaking nations. The most casual reader of current literature, or of standard works, is surprised at the similarity between what we term idioms and the phraseology of the Bible. If we enter the domain of proverbs or proverbial expressions, the similarity is even more striking: "Spare the rod and spoil the child." "The love of money is the root of all evil." "Answer a fool according to his folly." "A wise son maketh a glad father." "The rebuke of a friend is better than the flattery of an enemy." "Prosperity makes friends, adversity tries them;" and others might be quoted indefinitely as illustrating the influence of the Bible in framing and giving shape to our language. In poetic fancy and in strength of imaginative writing it is a diamond field that is as if untouched, because of its boundless wealth; and while fastidious youths and carping cynics may deem many of its similes and metaphors raw and crude, there are others so unquestionably and so surpassingly beautiful in their very simplicity, that ages of labored polishing and determined change have only left the original perfect in lustre and shown it to be beyond the power of man to improve. Not a heavenly orb, nor an animal, nor a tree,

nor a flower, known to the Prophets in those days, that have not been employed by the inspired writers to embellish the message they conveyed to mankind. The winds, the rivers, the clouds, the waves have been used to assist in portraying the varied mental and physical conditions of humanity, and performed their work so well that, thousands of years after by generations then undreamed of, they still warm the blood with enthusiasm, and fire the heart with new hopes and resolves, as they must have done long ages past: "The bright and morning star;" "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed;" "Whereunto ye do well, that ye take heed as unto a light that shineth in a dark place until the day dawn and the day star arise in your hearts;" "The rivers of thy pleasure;" "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of waters;" "How say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain;" "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows;" "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places," and countless others might be cited.

The language of the Bible is nothing if it is not figurative and imaginative. The 35th chapter of Isaiah is such a song as must move to admiration the coldest heart. The Old Testament is full of the grand and sublime. The 109th Psalm is a piece of invective of the olden style that none, even of the brightest and most powerful of modern writers, would dare to claim they could surpass. Compare it with the 1st Psalm, in which is told the peace and joy of the righteous, and with the first part of the 19th Psalm, wherein is described the glory of God, as displayed in the heavens, for contrast, and the change is marvelous. There is a tenderness always in the books that form the Bible, a confidence in the Creator manifested by their writers, and an assurance of good results from righteous deeds promised that, even to one who says he has lost confidence in the existence of God, must awaken a responsive sentiment and provoke a glow of genuine admiration. There has never been a philosopher, nor the language of a philosopher, that appealed with such irresistible force and directness to the better nature of the human race, as the plain and unassuming language of the four gospels. The words of Jesus, while giving expression to thoughts that have proved to be beyond the philosophy and reasoning of mankind, are so simple that a child might feel, if it did not comprehend, their import; and they do seem clearly to contradict the general supposition that complex thoughts require a language equally complex. It has often seemed to me that the possibilities of simplicity of speech, as capable of answering all, or nearly all requirements, has never so clearly been shown as in these four gospels.

"Jesus wept." It would be interesting to gather the various productions of eloquent and aspiring divines who have given original accounts of this event, and weigh and compare them

with the simple declaration of the apostolic scribe, as showing that the Savior of the world was a man among men, acquainted with grief, and one who knew the feelings that stir the fountain of the eyes and cause it to overflow. The language is the perfection of simplicity and beauty when compared with the context, and shows that the inspired writer had learned that secret of success in composition, for which all writers strive—the art of telling just enough, and leaving to the imagination the discovery of the rest. I do not recollect ever to have seen a more dramatic sentence than is to be found in II. Samuel, 12th chapter. The scene itself, as given in the unostentatious language of the scriptures, is unsurpassed for human interest. The man of God goes to the mighty king of Israel, and makes an accusation in covert terms. David, incensed at the wrong alleged, and failing to grasp the import of the prophet's utterances, condemns himself in his own words: "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die." "Thou art the man!" were the words of Nathan. I do not believe the English language, either in fiction or in history, contains anything to surpass this scene in dramatic interest or in majesty, in which, nevertheless, so much has been left to the imagination of the reader.

The Bible is the common property of all. There is no such thing as stealing from it. The world owes it a debt of gratitude which is too reluctantly repaid, if repaid it is. It is a fountain of living waters. To drink of it is to feel that inspiration, without which man never acquired influence or achieved fame. It would be unwise to hold that the Bible should be studied with the object of forming a style, as is injudiciously done with regard to the writings of men eminent in the literature of modern times; but it is certain no time is ever spent by the student to greater profit than in studying the Bible, even from a purely literary point of view; while, if he have but soul enough to catch its inspiration and comprehend its bulk, he may have reason to hope for fame in this life and glory in that to come. And the reason is easily given: As the store of hope and fear and the inducement to greater effort in this remarkable work are boundless, so also is its power of expression to meet all requirements unlimited. There is no subject of human interest the consideration of which is not enhanced and ennobled by some apt quotation from the Bible; and as surely is there some sententious expression in this Book of books that will fit the case exactly, and adorn and beautify the most eloquent oration or powerful discourse.

The Bible in its very nature is proverbial. There is no play of words. The thought is put plainly and honestly. It is robbed of all gilded covering, and goes on its divine mission appareled only in its intrinsic worth, in its glorious strength. It is humble as the humblest; greater than the greatest; it speaks alike to all hearts, however widely different the hopes that ebb and flow

with the pulsations in each. No man can go beyond or below it; none so poor in feeling and in hope that its tones do not appeal directly to him; no love of mankind so boundless that this Book, the Bible, does not tell of a love more deep, true, broad, universal.

R. W. Sloan.

WORLDLY IGNORANCE.

It is not surprising that the masses should be almost wholly uninformed or totally ignorant upon the subject of Mormonism, when the preachers of religion, the editors of newspapers, lawyers, judges, legislators, statesmen, presidents, rulers, and historians show so plainly that they either know nothing about it themselves, or wilfully, if not wickedly, close their eyes to facts, and continually pour out floods of slander and abuse respecting the leading men of the Church, and the principles of the gospel.

The Latter-day Saints know by investigation, and by the manifestations of the Holy Spirit to them, the gospel which they have received is simply the ancient gospel; which was and is the power of God unto salvation, as taught in the scriptures of Divine truth, and exemplified in the lives of the former-day saints.

The almost universal ignorance on the part of the learned and simple of both our opponents and friends—and we have many—is all the more remarkable, in view of the apparent ease with which they might become thoroughly informed if they would. If the gospel of Christ was some ancient system of philosophy, of dark mysterious origin and import, difficult of comprehension or past finding out, there might be some reason or excuse for the general blatant ignorance on the subject. But the gospel is now what it has been from the creation, the very essence of simplicity and plainness, so far as its requirements, or the duties it imposes upon mankind are concerned. So plain, indeed, that "the wayfaring man though a fool, need not err therein." In the beginning the plan of salvation as devised by the Creator was, and, it never having been changed, still is adapted to all the necessities of humanity. So simple and yet so broad and deep, that every creature comes within the reach of its power, and the scope of its meaning and ample provisions.

Truth is always simple and always plain. Mystery only attaches to man-made systems, to the false religions, and vain philosophy of men. "Mighty Babylon the great," is the name written on the forehead of the woman, sitting on the scarlet beast. "The mother of harlots and abominations of the earth," who is drunken "with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus." With this harlot arrayed in purple

and scarlet, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, the kings of the earth have committed fornication and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication, and she is "full of names of blasphemy." How completely the present conditions of the sectarian world correspond with this graphic description of them, given in the seventeenth chapter of the Revelations of St. John. While faith, hope and charity; mercy, justice and truth; humility, simplicity and virtue; patience, forbearance and longsuffering; knowledge, temperance and godliness, and confidence in God and integrity to His living word, are the plain but potent features of the work of the great God.

If the Latter-day Saints are building upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, then the materials, with which they are erecting their structure, are the authority, law, commandments, gifts, and graces of Christ's ancient apostolic gospel, notwithstanding the frailties and imperfections of mortality, by which humanity is beset. And when the dross of our human nature shall be purged out by fires of persecution and trial and the scum shall float away with the downward flowing stream of worldly failures and corruptions, the righteous will emerge from the fiery ordeal to inherit their blessings, and the wicked will be consumed. By our fruits let us be known, and by the law and the testimony let us be judged and awarded; and if we are not in harmony with these, then there is no light in us.

J. M.

IN THE NURSERY.

Where do I like my lady best?
In truth I cannot tell.
Like daily sun, from east to west,
O'er time of work, o'er time of rest,
She casts a shining spell.

From drawing-room to terrace moves
The presence of my dear.
As after Venus flit the doves,
My thoughts, my happy hopes, my loves
Fly up and follow near.

Yet if one picture there could be
Which I might choose to keep,
'Tis in the fire-lit nursery,
Two children clinging to her knee,
The third held close, asleep.

HARPER'S BAZAR.

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1921.

EDITORIAL:

A NOTABLE FAST OFFERING.

In response to the appeal of the council of general European relief, of which Hon. Herbert Hoover is chairman, for funds to alleviate the suffering of the destitute, especially of undernourished children in the near East countries of Europe, the Latter-day Saints observed a general fast on January 23rd, 1921, and devoted an equivalent of two meals, from which they abstained, to the aggrandisement of this noble charity. The Church presidency had recommended this means of providing the quota expected by our people, and to supply such further relief as seemed to be required. As a result of the enthusiasm of the Church organization and its auxiliary associations every ward (nearly one thousand) and nearly every Sunday-school participated, and the grand total of cash contributions sent in amounts to $109,834.42. A contribution from the Primary Association of sixty thousand little children, who gave their pennies and dimes, reached the splendid sum of $4,230,21. Mrs. Annie Wells Cannon, the Utah chairman of the Relief Council, was exceedingly happy in making announcement to Mr. Hoover of this wonderful result, which in proportion to population puts Utah far in advance of any of the States, and the Mormon people above any church or philanthropic organization in America. The money was collected through the wards and branches and forwarded direct to the bishop's office, whence it is being distributed under direction of President Heber J. Grant, Trustee-in-Trust of the Church, Presiding Bishop C. W. Nibley and Mrs. Cannon. It is understood that the funds will be applied as follows: Near East Relief Fund, $30,000, of which $6,000 goes direct to the relief of Latter-day Saints; $5,516,21 collected from the American, Canadian and Mexican mission, goes to President George Albert Smith, for the relief of the poor in the European mission. The donations from saints in Stakes outside of Utah amounting to $22,431,77 is remitted direct to the General European Relief Fund, which also receives the Utah contribution of $45,887,44.

Was ever the like of such a fund raised in such a manner for the relief of the hungry? The universal practice of the Latter-day Saints' system of fast-offerings would always provide every creature on earth with food enough to prevent starvation. What a lesson of gospel enlightenment is conveyed in this example of

practical charity. Oh, that the world would take notice and go and do likewise!

J. F. W.

THE NEW ADMINISTRATION.

PRESIDENT WARREN G. HARDING, of Ohio, was inaugurated president of the United States on the 4th of March, 1921, at Washington. He took the oath of office before Chief Justice White and delivered the usual inaugural address, before many thousands of his fellow-countrymen, standing before the east portico of the Capitol. His address was conservative and highly patriotic and was well received. The ceremonies of the installation of the new president and vice-president of the United States have for many years been attended by considerable display, a procession of military and patriotic organizations from the Capitol to the White House; a grand ball in the Pension office, the largest hall in Washington, and the assembling of tens of thousands of people from all parts of the country, have been the notable features. President Harding tabooed all this, on account of the serious times, and insisted upon a return to former-day simplicity. It thus transpired, and, aside from an escort of four troops of cavalry, he made the journey from his hotel, accompanied by President Wilson (whose health did not permit him to remain for the ceremonies), to the Capitol and back to the White House unaccompanied. The new vice-president, Calvin Coolidge, of Massachusetts, had already taken the oath of office; and the new president at once submitted the names of the men he had chosen to constitute his cabinet, and they were promptly confirmed by the Senate, as follows:

Secretary of State—Charles Evans Hughes, of New York.
Secretary of the Treasury—Andrew W. Mellon, of Pennsylvania.
Secretary of War—John W. Weeks, of Massachusetts.
Attorney-General—Harry M. Daugherty, of Ohio.
Postmaster-General—Will H. Hays, of Indiana.
Secretary of the Navy—Edwin Denby, of Michigan.
Secretary of the Interior—Albert B. Fall, of New Mexico.
Secretary of Agriculture—Henry Wallace, of Iowa.
Secretary of Commerce—Herbert Hoover, of California.
Secretary of Labor—James J. Davis, of Pennsylvania.

It is announced that the Hon. H. W. Fletcher, late U. S. minister to Mexico, was selected as assistant Secretary of State, and Major Theodore Roosevelt, as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The selection of ambassadors and ministers to foreign countries is eagerly looked for. The change and transfer of power from the democratic to the republican party has been accomplished with a popular approval never before so numerous, and the new men enter upon the great responsibility of conducting the important

offices of the government at a time, when momentous questions of political and commercial policy demand wise consideration and courageous management. They have complete control of the executive, and both branches of Congress; and much is expected of them, with confidence that the right party and right men have been called into place and power, to produce the best results of government.

J. F. W.

DEDICATION OF CHINA.

[ELDERS D. O. MCKAY, of the Twelve Apostles, and Hugh J. Cannon, president of Pioneer Stake of Zion, were appointed near the end of 1920, to a mission, visiting the Church missions of the Pacific islands, the Far East, and ultimately of Africa, Asia, and Europe, and so completing the circumnavigation of the globe.

They sailed from Vancouver, going direct to China, and were to sail thence to Japan and the Sandwich Islands. From late reports it appears they then returned to San Francisco to secure passage from there to the Society Islands. Elder Cannon has written several interesting letters to the *Deseret News* and *Improvement Era*, descriptive of their travels, and the following account of the dedication of the Chinese realm for the preaching of the gospel.

It may be of interest to readers to know that at a special conference held in Salt Lake City, August 28th, 1852, over one hundred missionaries were called to carry the gospel message to nearly every country that could possibly be reached in both hemispheres. Among these, three were sent to China: Elders Hosea Stout, James Lewis, and Chapman Duncan. They made the journey overland to San Francisco and sailed from there, March 8th, 1853, to Hong Kong.

After spending the spring and summer in a vain effort to interest people in China, either native or European residents, they returned and reported their labors in writing from San Francisco, August 27th, 1853, and soon after returned to Zion. Since that time no serious effort has been made to introduce the gospel to the Chinese. Whether the time is near, or may still be remote to do so, the field now has been properly dedicated by one of the special witnesses of the Lord, for that purpose, as will be seen in the perusal of Elder Cannon's letter.—EDITOR].

Elder David O. McKay, of the Council of the Twelve, and the writer, arrived in Peking, the chief city of China, Saturday evening, January 8th, 1921. The horde of ragged and revolting mendicants, grimy porters and insistent jinrikisha men, who fought noisily for possession of us, as we emerged from the station, was not such as to inspire a feeling of affectionate brotherhood. However, we had gone to Peking to do the Lord's

will, as nearly as we could ascertain what it was. His inspiration rested upon his servant in charge, and Elder McKay decided that the land should be dedicated and set apart for the preaching of the gospel of the Master. It seemed most desirable that this should be done on the following day, as that was the only Sabbath we should be in Peking. But where, in the midst of that clamor and confusion, could a suitable spot be found? The city lies on a level, barren plain. There are no forests, and, as far as we knew, no groves nor even clumps of trees. We were wholly unfamiliar with the city and had met no one who could enlighten us. If we went outside the surrounding walls, there was reason to believe no secluded spot could be found, nor the ever-present crowd of supplicants avoided.

January 9th dawned clear and cold. With no definite goal in mind, we left the hotel and walked through the legation quarter, under the shadow of dear Old Glory, out into what is known as "The Forbidden City," past the crumbling temples reared to an "Unknown God." Directed, as we believe, by a Higher Power, we came to a grove of cypress trees, partially surrounded by a moat, and walked to its extreme northwest corner, then retraced our steps until reaching a tree, with divided trunk, which had attracted our attention when we first saw it. "This is the spot," said Elder McKay. A reposeful peace hovered over the place which seemed already hallowed; one felt that it was almost a profanation to tread thereon with covered head and feet. Two men were in sight, but they seemed oblivious to our presence, and they soon left the grove. There, in the heart of a city with a million inhabitants, we were entirely alone, except for the presence of a divinely sweet and comforting Spirit. An act destined to affect the lives of four hundred and fifty millions of people now living, as well as of millions yet unborn, calls forth feelings of profound solemnity, and that, too, despite the fact that the vast majority of those affected may die in ignorance of the event.

After a prayer had been offered and the spot dedicated, as a place of supplication and for the fulfilment of the object of our visit, Elder David O. McKay, in the authority of the Holy Apostleship, dedicated and set apart the Chinese Realm for the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, whenever the Church authorities shall deem it advisable to send out missionaries for that purpose. Never was the power of his calling more apparent in his utterances. He blessed the land and its benighted people, and supplicated the Almighty to acknowledge this blessing. He prayed that famine and pestilence might be stayed, that the government might become stable, either through its own initiative, or by the intervention of other powers, and that superstition and error, which for ages have enveloped the people, might be discarded, and Truth take their place. He supplicated

the Lord to send to this land broad-minded and intelligent men and women, that upon them might rest the spirit of discernment and the power to comprehend the Chinese nature, so that in the souls of this people an appreciation of the glorious gospel might be awakened. It was such a prayer and blessing as must be recognized in heaven, and though the effects may not be suddenly apparent, they will be none the less real.

And never, perhaps, has there been a land more greatly in need of heavenly aid. One cannot help but feel that if it were not for the watchful and unselfish attitude of the United States, China's national rights would very quickly be invaded. With the largest population of any country in the world, she is wholly impotent, and in addition to her own helplessness, a curse seems to overshadow her. Millions of her people are starving. It is estimated by the committee in charge of the relief work that five dollars will save a life, but the five dollars must come from abroad. And yet, if this nation would observe one of the simplest of the Lord's commandments, that of the monthly fast, and give the meals thus saved to those in need, the famine problem would be solved. This would furnish two meals daily to each of the fifteen million sufferers. The cypress tree is a symbol of sorrow and sadness in China, and this cypress grove seemed a peculiarly fitting place in which to invoke the blessing of heaven upon this oppressed and sorrowing people. At Shan-Hai-Quan, the point at which that wonder of wonders, the great Chinese wall, meets the sea, and on the frontier of the famine district, we took a picture. Though the morning was bitterly cold, we judged it to be zero weather, some of these people were nearly naked. The shreds of patches which only partially covered their emaciated and shivering bodies might well fell complimented at being called rags. One contemplates China's past accomplishments with a feeling akin to awe. We respect old age, and especially so when, with antiquity, we see achievement; and it is well to remember that this land had a highly developed civilization nearly twenty-five centuries before the Christian era. Notwithstanding her present pitiably inane condition, we have met some admirable Chinese people, and cherish the sincere hope that at no very distant day the light of the gospel may penetrate the present overwhelming darkness. Though the abject misery we beheld appealed to our tenderest sympathies, gold and silver we could not give, but the door was unlocked for them, through which they may enter into eternal life.

Deeds are powerful, mere words are weak,
Batt'ring at high heaven's door,
Let thy love by actions speak;
Wipe the tears from sorrow's cheek,
Clothe the poor.

INEQUALITIES OF NATURE.

THERE are few things more striking than Nature's inequalities; and few things that help the spread of atheism in our midst so much, when not considered from a true standpoint. We see such contrasts, such contradictions, such peculiarities in Nature that it takes very little to turn our minds from truth to error, unless we have a talisman or key whereby these obstacles can be satisfactorily removed. We may be led sometimes to ask: Why is one person so gifted, so caressed? Why is life to him a smooth river, down which he glides indifferent often to anything that goes on around him, save the beauties and pleasures of the world? Why is he permitted to dive deep into the well of knowledge and acquire wisdom and refinement with which to enchant and edify his fellow-men, in contrast with his brother? Why is he blessed with health and wealth? Why is his society courted, his friendship a thing to be desired, his opinion law? Another man may be to all appearances his equal, nay, even his superior so far as physical qualities go, yet something is lacking.

We see this opposite, unlearned, poor in worldly goods, yet blessed oftentimes with better health, strong, and able to work long hours, toiling day after day, week after week, year after year for a scanty pittance, scarce enough to keep body and spirit together. He has no knowledge of science. No soft refined speech can he utter wherewith to gain admission to the presence of the great. He may be honest and brave, with a heart true as steel, and ready to help a creature in distress; his life may be and often is of the two the better and purer, yet when he is in company of the pampered child of fortune and of the scholar he feels humbled to the dust. Can we wonder at him asking the question, "Who hath made us to differ?" He knows there is but the one Creator who made us all. Then again I say, can we wonder that the infidel's assertion that there is no God should find a response, from the man who sees such evidences of partiality in his own experience, by a Being who is "just" and "no respecter of persons?" It is right here that he requires guiding and his doubts set at rest, for if left to himself he gradually sinks into unbelief and it is a hard matter to get him back to the straight path again. It should be told him that where much is given much will be required; the learned will have to account for their talents, the wealthy likewise, and the humble also. Opportunities are given us all, at least once in a lifetime, to improve our talents and if we neglect this golden period, we alone are to blame. The poet says:

"There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life, is bound in shallows, and in miseries."

He should be shown that the humble laborer is as essential as the Greek or Latin scholar, the humble mechanic as the scientific discoverer. The products of the earth sustain mankind and a tiller of the soil is of more importance to mankind than the greatest scholar that ever lived, or ever will live. Let us stand on the brink of the mighty Niagara and watch the waters as they dash wildly down the steep incline, listen to the continual roar and rush of thousands of tons of water per minute, and remember this is never ceasing; rest is unknown to these turbulent waters, year in year out, whose roar can be heard for miles; and contrast it with the clear little spring dripping in some moss-covered nook drop by drop; and yet the same Creator made them both. There cannot be such a difference in humanity as in this spring and the most wonderful waterfall of the world. How easy, it seems, we could stop that little stream of water, but how impossible to stop the mighty flow of Niagara! The same God made the lowly hillock, that erected Mont Blanc; the glorious sun and the feeble glow worm, the vast forest and a blade of grass.

Can we, dare we say these lesser things are useless, or that less care has been bestowed upon their creation? No, we cannot, for all and each have their respective places in Nature and she would be incomplete without them. Indeed the contemplation of these smaller objects educate us to appreciate the more striking ones. Our minds are not always able to grasp the grandeur surrounding us, but by learning to impress these less objects upon our minds we in time learn the greater lesson. The same rule applies to humanity. To see an ignorant, rough, unpolished person, we can better understand the trials and preparations and processes that must be gone through, in order to polish and refine the mind; but let us not despise the unpolished stone, for fear, when polished, it serves to reflect our own ignorance, at having looked to the coat rather than the soul, the manner rather than the mind.

Education and refinement go hand in hand and if wisely used can be made of inestimable value to mankind, and on the other hand if misapplied can be made as instrumental of evil; for vice hidden under the garb of refinement is often made to look so much like virtue that many have been led astray by its deception. It should be more consolation to know that the knowledge of good and evil will condemn men more strongly than their ignorance. No light responsibility rests upon those upon whom the advantages of education are bestowed; and although no man will be saved in his ignorance, and it is a duty we owe ourselves and society, to educate and improve ourselves as much as possible, there will be no need to doubt the Creator's love and justice to each and every one of us by asking, "Who hath made us to differ?" For it is our Father who will judge us, he knows our circumstances; and why need we fear the Being who has evinced such love for us all our lives? He will be just to his children; the

fault will be ours if we win not His smile and the prize He bids us win—eternal life. Truth, honor and duty, are within the comprehension of us all, and these will stand by us in that day when the wisdom of the world shall perish, and inequalities be blotted out forevermore.

MARION E. SCOLES.

MINUTES OF THE BIRMINGHAM CONFERENCE.

THE semi-annual Birmingham conference was held in Handsworth Chapel, Sunday, March 13th, 1921, President George Albert Smith presiding, and President Charles W. Hatch conducting the exercises. The opening session was devoted to a demonstration of Sunday-school work, along with reports by Superintendents Charles Collins, George E. Hunter, and Charles D. McGilvray of the Handsworth, Coventry, and Kidderminster branches. President Smith commented on the same, and told a beautiful story, illustrating the need of laying a good foundation for character building. There were one hundred and thirty-three present.

The afternoon session was addressed by the traveling missionaries, and Elder Thomas W. Wheeler, who stated that the plan of salvation is given that mankind may be saved through obedience to its laws and ordinances. Elder J. Brown spoke on "The Resurrection;" Elder N. Palfreyman, "Baptism Essential to Salvation;" Sister Caroline J. Hatch, "The Scattering of Israel," and Elder Hughes, "What it takes to be a Christian." There were ninety-three present.

The evening meeting was addressed by President Smith, who, in an eloquent manner, answered the questions that have troubled the world, namely, "Where we come from;" "Why we are here," and "Where we go after we leave this probation," with scriptural references on pre-existence, the need of work with faith, and upon rewards in the hereafter for faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. The speaker held his audience in rapt attention, and many investigators present commented on the clearness of his exposition of the gospel. President Hatch bore his testimony, and Elder Wheeler in a short address told how the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints opened the way for the people to progress, both spiritually and temporally. Elder Jenson explained what it means to be a Latter-day Saint. A chorus of mixed voices sang, "Who Are These Arrayed in White," under the direction of Brother Charles D. Edwards. Miss Lucy Hartopp and Elder Hughes sang solos, with Brother Walter S. Boyd as accompanist. Refreshments were served between meetings by the Relief Society sisters, under direction of Sister Emma Vale.

On Saturday evening a priesthood meeting was held. Presi-

dents Robert L. Dunn, John M. Joseph, John B. Ward, William Dyson and George E. Hunter reported their branches as flourishing. President Smith and Elder Wheeler spoke, and President Hatch commented on the improvement shown; saying that with more missionaries arriving the future of the conference looks very bright. A baptismal service was held in the afternoon, when President Hatch baptized four adults.

A feature of the conference was a Primary childrens' program given in the chapel, following the Priesthood meeting. A special entertainment in honor of the tercentenary of the Pilgrim Fathers, and the growth of Mormonism, had been arranged by Sister Caroline J. Hatch. The children told the story in music and song, and tableaus were given depicting "Joseph Smith's Prayer," "The Organization of the Church," "The Mormon Battalion," "The Indian's Dance," and a "Scene on the Plains." The children were suitably costumed, and the "Red Men," with war whoops, gave a western atmosphere to the scene. Sister Hatch said many of the Utah pioneers were descendants of the Pilgrims, and introduced President Smith as one. President Smith then told of his ancestry, stating that his grandfather, George A. Smith, was a Utah pioneer of 1847, of the first company; And that his maternal ancestors were descendants of Edward Winslow, of the *Mayflower* company, and on his father's side were among the early settlers of Massachusetts. He praised the work of Sister Hatch in organizing the only Primary Association in the European mission. Over two hundred were present.

In honor of Elders John Owen Hughes and J. Elden Brown, who have been assigned to labor in Northampton branch, a "send off" party was held at Handsworth chapel, Tuesday, March 15th, 1921.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Release.—Elder Thomas L. Redford was honorably released March 20th, 1921, to return home.

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LIVERPOOL:

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